

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

Please amend claims 1, 14, and 19 and cancel claim 11 as follows:

Sub C1  
5 1. (Amended) A storage system comprising:  
a front-end control element for controlling information exchange with one or more attached host computer systems;  
a back-end control element for controlling information exchange with I/O devices;  
and  
an interconnect element coupled to said front-end control element and coupled to  
10 said back-end control element to enable exchange of information therebetween, wherein the storage system is adapted to implement additional front-end control elements, back-end control elements and interconnect elements independent of all other such elements.

15 11. (Canceled)

Sub C1  
20 14. (Amended) A front-end control element for a storage subsystem comprising:  
a host system interface;  
a processor coupled to said host system interface to process host system generated I/O requests received through said host system interface; and  
a SAN interface coupled to said processor for coupling said front-end control element to a back-end control element, wherein said front-end control element is adapted to be added to the storage subsystem independent of back-end control elements.

Sub C1  
25 19. (Amended) A back-end control element for a storage subsystem comprising:  
a disk drive interface for coupling said back-end control element to a plurality of disk drives; and  
a SAN interface coupled to said disk drive interface for coupling said back-end  
30 control element to a front-end control element, wherein said back-end control element is